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Contents

6

MICE INJECTED WITH WEED

And other news you missed if you've been stoned
for the last six months.

By Stranger Staff



10

MEDICAL MARIJUANA WOULD HAVE SAVED JOHN BELUSHI'S LIFE

Jim Belushi talks about his weed farm, *SNL*, cannabis
as a spark for creativity, and his brother John.

By Lester Black



14

BIRDS AND BUDS

The weed growers on the Olympic Peninsula
who also breed falcons.

By Katie Herzog



27

THE UNTOLD STORY OF MARIJUANA LEGALIZATION

How billionaire George Soros and a few of his friends
gave us bongs full of legal weed.

By Lester Black



47

THINGS TO DO FOR 4/20 AND BEYOND



56

FUN PAGE!



COVER PHOTO BY
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IN WEED NEWS

What you missed if you've been stoned
for the last six months.

BY STRANGER STAFF



PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES LOVE LEGALIZING

Pete Buttigieg says, "The safe, regulated, and legal sale of marijuana is an idea whose time has come." Elizabeth Warren says, "The federal government needs to get out of the business of outlawing marijuana." Kamala Harris says, "I am absolutely in favor of legalizing marijuana." Bernie Sanders says, "We need to end the destructive war on drugs." Beto O'Rourke says, "We should end the federal prohibition of marijuana." Jay Inslee says, "It's time to legalize marijuana nationally." Cory Booker introduced a legalization bill in Congress recently called the Marijuana Justice Act, explaining, "Black people are 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana possession than their white peers, even though they use marijuana at similar rates." Kirsten Gillibrand cosponsored the bill. Joe Biden, who has not been great on this issue, and hasn't said much about it lately, said in 2010: "I think legalizing is a mistake."

SEATTLE'S BEST WEED STORE ATM

Most weed stores require you to pay in cash, and most of them have cash machines, and most cash machines charge you money just for allowing you access to your own money... but not at the Reef! The Capitol Hill store with jellyfish painted on its exterior has an ATM inside that charges no fees whatsoever. If you have some change left after your purchase, maybe you need some al pastor tacos at Carmelo's Tacos, just a block away inside Hillcrest Market.

HASHTAG CANNABIS HAS TO MOVE

Stone Way pot store Hashtag Cannabis, "arguably the best recreational cannabis shop north of the Ship Canal," according to *The Stranger*, is located in a building that's about to be bulldozed. Another victim of the impending demolition is Stone Way Cafe. A new five-story office building will take their place, leaving the store and the cafe scrambling to find new homes. They both have first dibs on the retail spaces in the new building, but Hashtag's director of marketing says, "Finding a different space is much more appealing to us, because then we wouldn't have to close down."

Hashtag plans to stay in the Wallingford/Fremont neighborhood. Unrelated but interesting: Hashtag co-owner Logan Bowers is running for Seattle City Council in District 3.



TIMOTHY KENNEY

NOW YOU CAN DAB WITHOUT A BLOWTORCH



PUFFCO PEAK

Dabs are incredibly flavorful and incredibly powerful, and they require much less smoke in your lungs than a hit off a bong or a joint does.

But the problem is the conventional way to do a dab makes it look like you're freebasing. You have to use a blowtorch to heat up a glass piece at the end of a bong and then drop some concentrated cannabis onto that hot piece and inhale the smoke it produces.

Enter the Puffco Peak. This product is a handheld electronic dab rig, roughly the shape and weight of a glass bottle of beer, that removes any need for a blowtorch. Instead of using an open flame to heat your dab nail, the device has a self-contained heating element. As you breathe in, your hit percolates through a water chamber in a pyramid-like glass mouthpiece. The device, which you can buy at puffco.com, starts at about \$380, roughly equivalent to the price of the Puffco's closest competitor, the Dr. Dabber, which runs about \$400.

There are other products—like electronic dab nails that you plug into your wall and then put on your bong—that can make dabbing more accessible as well. But the Puffco Peak is particularly well-suited to replace the blowtorch.

NFL PLAYER QUILTS OVER CANNABIS

After being suspended again for violating the NFL's substance-abuse policy, Dallas Cowboys defensive tackle David Irving announced that he was quitting the league until it makes using pot legal for players. He explained: "I go through a lot of pain... Nothing helps better [than weed]... It's much better than that opiate shit... Some people say: 'Oh, you're addicted to weed, you're addicted to this and that.' I mean, if I'm going to be addicted to something, I'd rather be addicted to marijuana... than Xanax bars or the Hydrox or the Seroquel and all that crazy shit they feed you."



MICE ARE GETTING INJECTED WITH WEED

The local Tulalip Tribes recently gave \$2 million to Stanford University to pay for two studies: One looks at how THC and CBD can help treat heroin and opioid addiction, and the other examines how the two compounds can treat Alzheimer's disease.

Both studies will use cannabis concentrates on rodents.

This is big news, because cannabis is one of the most difficult compounds for American scientific researchers to get their hands on. There are almost no federal grants for studying potential cannabis-based therapies.

Teri Gobin, vice chair of the Tulalip Tribes, says they are committed to finding a cannabis-based cure for opioid addiction: "Like so many communities across the nation, we are deploying an ever-increasing amount of resources to fight this epidemic."

The Tulalip Tribes currently operate a retail cannabis store called Remedy Tulalip. Les Parks, a council member for the tribes, said they plan on opening a cannabis growing operation and a testing lab in the future.

As for the tests on mice, Stanford bioengineering professor Annelise Barron said this is the first time the Behavioral and Functional Neuroscience Laboratory is working directly with cannabis material. They obtained the oil from the only farm in the country that produces federally approved research cannabis. The farm didn't tell them what kind of strain produced the oil, but they do know that it contains 28.4 percent THC and 1.4 percent CBD, along with 200 other cannabinoids.

Since the study launched, researchers have been dosing the rodents in various ways, including direct brain delivery through an implanted pump, injection, and oral dosing. Barron said the team is currently "working on understanding the mechanistic pathways responsible for the efficacy observed in our studies." She said the team could be publishing peer-reviewed reports as soon as one year from now.



EXOTIC HASH FROM LAKE CITY

Lebanese-style hash, a concentrate with a distinctive flavor and effect, and a texture like Play-Doh, is almost impossible to find in Washington State. Luckily, Nicholas Saad, owner of Seattle company Sitka, knows how to make it. Saad says when customers from the Middle East see it, "they freak out."

THE SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN BEST WAY TO STORE WEED

A new study from Italian scientists provides more specific information on how to store your stash without it degrading over time.

For the uninitiated: Cannabis degrades when exposed to light, air, and heat. Containers that are airtight and block out light are better than those pretty, see-through glass mason jars (but if you're up to your eyeballs in mason jars, there are sleeves made of wetsuit material, such as neoprene, that can block out light and give the glass an added buffer against bumps and drops). Too much moisture in a sealed jar will result in mold, but not enough will result in weed so dry that it crumbles when touched—so to regulate humidity, drop in a Boveda pack.

And what about refrigerators and freezers? The Italians tested them as storage spaces. The scientists collected various high-potency hash and flower from law-enforcement agencies, tested it for THC, CBD, and CBN, and then stored the weed in several ways—at room temperature, in a refrigerator, and in the freezer—to determine which was best for preserving THC levels.

The scientists discovered that the cannabis stored at room temperature lost a considerable amount of its THC after 100 days. The cannabis stored at room temperature in light conditions lost 13 percent of its THC, and the cannabis stored at room temperature in dark conditions lost 11 percent.

The refrigerated cannabis showed a slower rate of THC loss, although after four years, what was stored at room temperature and in a refrigerator had both lost nearly 100 percent of their THC.

The cannabis that was stored in the freezer, however, retained virtually all of its THC and experienced minimal degradation.

AREA MAN BOILS EGGS WHILE BEING STONED

In March of 2019, a man in an apartment on Capitol Hill, near downtown Seattle, tried to make some hard-boiled eggs while he smoked weed in another room. As soon as the water came to a boil, he was going to let the eggs cook for one minute, turn off the heat, cover the eggs, and let them sit for another 10 minutes, per the instructions in *Cook's Illustrated* for making hard-boiled eggs.

Unfortunately, the man totally forgot about the eggs. An hour later, he walked into the kitchen to discover all the water boiled out, cracked and blackened eggs stuck to the bottom of the pan, and the beginnings of smoke. He turned off the heat, let everything cool, threw the eggs in the compost, tried to clean the pan, gave up, decided to buy a new one, and thanked his lucky stars he didn't burn down the building. 🌿



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Medical Marijuana Would Have Saved My Brother's Life

Jim Belushi talks about his weed farm, *SNL*, cannabis as a spark for creativity, and his brother John.

BY LESTER BLACK

PHOTOS COURTESY OF BELUSHI'S FARM

Jim Belushi is far from the first celebrity to get into the legal pot game. Stoned luminaries like Willie Nelson, Snoop Dogg, Tommy Chong, and the Marley family are selling pot with their names on it in multiple states across the country. But Belushi is doing something different. Those other celebrities simply created a brand that they license to pot farmers, whereas Belushi is actually growing the pot on his own property, often with his own hands.

Belushi started slowly, first with a small medical grow three years ago and then transitioning into a full recreational farm with multiple outdoor and indoor gardens. He's been selling his carefully curated strains for two years, but he only recently decided it was time to put his name on the label. Pot shoppers in Oregon



can now buy weed straight from Belushi's Farm.

I caught up with the actor, musician, and former *Saturday Night Live* star by phone. His voice was hoarse from singing at a community party he throws on his farm every year. We talked about what it's like growing legal pot, working with David Lynch, and how he thinks medical marijuana could have saved his brother John Belushi's life.

How long have you smoked pot?

When I was in high school, I smoked Mexican ragweed—which, by the way, I've been trying to get the guys to do this with me. I want to do Mexican ragweed with 6 percent THC—so I can actually smoke a whole joint! Today's [THC] temperature is pretty high; it's kind of a disappointment that people don't understand that it doesn't have to have high THC to be good.

Did you smoke pot at *Saturday Night Live*?

No. Unfortunately, when I was at *SNL*, I was using whiskey as my medication.

How often do you think you consume pot now?

Maybe three times a week I take a hit off my [vape] pen. But I do consume CBD every day, because I know the endocannabinoids in my body and my homeostasis is out of balance somewhere every day.

It's interesting that you relate to it in medical terms, because a lot of people think of cannabis only as a recreational drug. Do you separate medical use from recreational use, or is it always medicine to you?

The wellness part of cannabis is great for helping people with Alzheimer's disease, people struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder, people struggling with trauma. The number one fear in life

is death, and the second is the collapse of family. Many people come from collapsed families, whether it's divorce or a disease that broke the family up, whether there's a death like in my family, a loss of

every year. And then I saw him go into a seizure in my house, and I didn't know what it was. And now we know it could have been CTE [chronic traumatic encephalopathy]. And then he went to college

It enhances the taste of food. It enhances the touch of your lover's skin. It also gives you euphoria, a sense of joy, and a higher consciousness. So there's wellness all across.

I loved your work on the *Twin Peaks* reboot. What was it like working with David Lynch? Is he someone who seems like he's stoned even when he's not smoking weed at all?

Well, most of the time [on TV projects], we have a half-hour lunch on set. But on David Lynch's projects, we have an hour lunch because he's meditating for that hour. When you watch *Twin Peaks*, you think, "That guy must have been doing ayahuasca," because of the visions he has. But he gets it all from meditation.

What do you think about being another celebrity in the cannabis game? There's obviously Snoop Dogg, Willie Nelson, and Marley Natural. How does it feel to be one of the first celebrities to get into the industry?

The difference between me and the men you just mentioned—all beautiful men, by the way—is they are white-labeling. I am growing it. I am curing it. I am flushing out the irrigation to make sure the ash is white. I'm pruning it. I'm trimming it. And now I'm marketing it.

But I love the agricultural aspect of it. I love the girls. [Editor's note: Pot farmers commonly refer to pot plants as "girls" or "ladies" because only the female pot plants produce the intoxicating flowers we smoke.] I love the feminine energy on my farm. But like all girls, you have to treat them right. I play music for them. When they're vegging, I play baby-making music for them, I play Marvin Gaye. And then as they are growing, I play reggae. And then when we're about to take them down, I play gospel music so they feel like they're seeing God before we take them. I love these girls. 



"I am growing it. I am curing it. I'm pruning it. I'm trimming it."

business, all of these people need some kind of medicine.

All of these men who came back from World War II saw things that no one should see, and they leaned on alcohol, that was their medicine.

and he found his medicine, but it was considered a drug.

Do you think if medical marijuana was around then, it could have helped him?

I think what we know about marijuana today, if we had known it in the 1970s, a lot more people would be alive, including my brother. Danny Aykroyd said, "If your brother John was a pothead, he would be alive today."

The medicine of marijuana will help prevent the collapse of families. I came from a collapsed family and suffered the trauma of John's death—you could imagine—I've always been in search of family because of it. And this family of cannabis people is a terrific family. They're all being led by the plant.

But the wellness of cannabis is not just for Alzheimer's, headaches, anxiety—it also enhances the sound of music. It sparks creativity.

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Birds and Buds

The weed growers on the Olympic Peninsula who also breed falcons.

BY KATIE HERZOG

PHOTOS COURTESY OF FALCANNA

The first thing I notice when I walk into Bethany and Justin Rondeau's house outside Port Angeles is a falcon wearing a hat in the living room.

Perched atop a stand that looks not unlike a cat tower is Sky, a 12-year-old saker falcon with brown and white feathers. He usually lives in his own coop outside, but on the morning of my visit, he is inside the house and has been made temporarily blind by the medieval-looking leather hood on his head.

The hood was hand-stitched by a man in Utah, and there are dozens more on a shelf in the couple's kitchen, each one perfectly constructed to fit atop a raptor's noggin. The purpose is to cover the bird's eyes and obscure its vision. This calms them, like a baby swaddled in cotton.

Bethany and Justin Rondeau are

in two very different but oddly parallel businesses: falconry and cannabis. At this point, their boutique canna-



bis business, which they aptly named Falcanna, brings in more revenue than the birds do, but that could change. The couple has begun selling their birds to

traders in the Persian Gulf, where falcon racing is a sport engaged in by some of the world's richest men, including kings, princes, and sheikhs.

The men who buy these birds—and they are all men—drive Land Cruisers and Range Rovers (or take private planes or helicopters) into the Arabian Desert, where their birds are tested on speed and agility. The top falcons can fly more than 200 miles per hour, and the highest ever paid for a falcon, Bethany tells me while we settle into a conference table in her living room, is \$700,000.

The Rondeaus' birds go for significantly less. Still, at not even 30 years old, Bethany, along with her husband, Justin, has already owned several successful businesses, starting with the black-market weed the couple used to grow in an Airstream closet. They've

Sky, right, is one of their rescue falcons and a brand ambassador. Bethany Rondeau, left, in the Hoh Rain Forest (photo by Jireh Soriano).



Justin and Bethany Rondeau both got into falconry after reading the young-adult novel My Side of the Mountain.

made money, reinvested it, and then made more. In addition to breeding birds that are among the most prized in the world, the Rondeaus grow some of the finest weed in Washington State.

The Rondeau homestead is unassuming from the outside. Perched beside a rural highway on

the northern part of the Olympic Peninsula, it looks from the road like a half-finished construction site. When I pull up, there is an RV parked outside an old A-frame in the middle of being remodeled, and cars and trucks are parked haphazardly in the dirt. A bearded man pops his head out of the RV

and directs me next door, to a neat-looking house where Justin and Bethany live. She later explains that the man in the RV is a former naturopath from Seattle who moved out here to care for their 70 falcons and hawks.

Bethany is 28 years old but looks even younger. She's got long, fine

hair, delicate features, and no trace of makeup on. In the photos on her Instagram page, she occasionally poses in ball gowns in the nearby Hoh Rain Forest, the thousand-year-old trees dripping with moss and cannabis smoke curling out of her mouth. But today she's wearing a flannel shirt, jeans, and slippers.



Her husband, who joins us shortly after I arrive, is 34 years old, with dark brown hair, a shaggy beard, and ears that stick out from his head. When he's by the bright kitchen windows, the light seems to beam right through them.

"I always say—and this is totally true—Bethany saved me from a

life of mediocrity," Justin says. "It would have been a nice life, but it wouldn't have been this."

He gestures around him. "This includes their spare but beautiful home on 11 acres, property that was trashed when they moved in (there was a beehive in the basement, which they moved outside and

kept), but today it is immaculate. The kitchen windows gaze across farmland to the deep-blue waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

There's a landmass in the distance, maybe Vancouver Island, and on a clear day, you can see all the way to Whistler. To the south, the Olympic Mountains loom. The

home isn't pretentious, but it does have touches of luxury, including a Japanese bidet in the bathroom, and the views are stunning from every room.

Justin, a native of Forks, was raised working-class in one of the oldest families on the Olympic Peninsula. A member of the Umpqua Tribe on his dad's side, he's also a descendant of John Huelsdonk, one of the first white settlers in the area, on his mom's side. Huelsdonk is known as the "Iron Man of the Hoh" because he carried an iron stove 40 miles through the Hoh Rain Forest.

"I had a good dog and a good hawk," Justin says, explaining Bethany's initial attraction to him.

At the time, Huelsdonk was considered one of the greatest hunters and trappers on the peninsula. Today, his descendant hunts in those same mountains. When Justin and Bethany aren't eating venison he's killed with a bow and arrow, their source of meat is pigs and chicken they've raised themselves.

The Rondeaus aren't postapocalyptic end-of-day preppers, but self-sufficiency is important to them. For Justin, this is part of his family history, but Bethany is different. She comes from the type of money that allows you to hire people to do work for you. The first child of oil executives and serial entrepreneurs, Bethany grew up mostly in Oklahoma and Texas, in houses that had indoor pools and elevators. Her dad, she says, is very into his collection of airplanes.

"There are three jobs in my family," she says, "chemical engineer, attorney, and doctor. I was supposed to go to college, get a degree, and have a three-car garage and

two kids. That was the plan. I wasn't down with that plan."

Instead, she got into raptors.

Bethany got interested in falconry after reading *My Side of the Mountain*, a young-adult novel about a boy who runs away from home and raises a baby falcon on



Falcanna's pesticide-free Orange Blossom concentrate.

his own. She got her first hawk at 14. But before her parents would consent to getting their teen daughter a pet raptor, she says they made her sign a liability waiver: If it ever attacked her siblings, they would take over ownership and get rid of it.

Apex predators are an unusual hobby for a young woman, and when I ask if Bethany was a tomboy or a girly girl, she seems a bit exasperated by the question. She was both: She liked putting on dresses, but she also liked watching birds with three-inch talons hunt for their dinner. She's sick of being asked about her gender, something journalists tend to focus on.

"Gender has never held me back because I've never given it permission to hold me back," she says,

adding that anyone who underestimates her for any reason does so at their own peril.

Her husband nods along as she says this, clearly agreeing.

Justin also got interested in falconry after reading *My Side of the Mountain*. In his early 20s, he was apprenticing for a master falconer on Whidbey Island when he and Bethany happened to meet.

"I had a good dog and a good hawk," Justin says, explaining her attraction to him. They've been together, along with the dog, ever since.

It's a partnership that seems almost ideally balanced: Where she is cutthroat, a businesswoman to her very core, he is disarmingly goofy and tender, making sure his wife is fed and hydrated while she's working. Her parents, however, weren't thrilled about the partnership, especially when she moved to the Northwest to live in an Airstream outside Corvallis, Oregon, with a man she'd just met. She says her parents cut her out of

Justin has a green thumb and is fascinated by genetic potential.

their will, and they didn't speak to each other for two years.

"Meanwhile, my parents said I couldn't be cut out of the will because then my two brothers would inherit their whole debt," Justin jokes, sitting beside her.

The couple found a farm in Corvallis with people willing to let them park the Airstream in their horse pasture for \$200 a month. In order to pay their rent and start saving, they got a few cannabis clones from a friend and turned the closet in their camper into a grow room using 400-watt lights. That first cycle, they grew half a pound of weed, and decided to keep going.

Justin has a green thumb, and he's fascinated by genetic potential. When it comes to breeding falcons, this means collecting semen. Justin shows me a video on his phone of the collection process: A man wearing a flat rubber hat walks into a falcon's enclosure, bends at the knees, makes a cry like a wailing baby, and the falcon mounts his head, flaps its wings a few times, does its thing, and flies off. The semen collected from the hat will be used to inseminate a female of the species.

"Wow, that was fast," I say.

"C'mon," Justin replies. "It wasn't that fast. Give him some credit."

Breeding new strains of cannabis doesn't require getting humped, but there is a lot of trial and error.

"Genetics have always played a huge factor in our success," Bethany says. "It makes a brand unique. Whoever came up with the Honeycrisp apple is a multi-millionaire, I guarantee it."

After a year of growing weed in their Airstream in Corvallis, the couple moved up to Washington and started a medical dispensary located between Sequim and Port Angeles. Even then, 90 percent of the products they sold in the dispensary they grew themselves.

Bethany would work on the retail side seven days a week while Justin was tending the plants. And in the early days, they didn't have much to protect them from either criminals or the law. Bethany says they had a good relationship with the local sheriff's department—but at any moment, their business could have been raided, as was happening elsewhere across the state. People would lose everything in a moment: their inventory, their cash, their business, and even their homes and other assets.

Despite the risks of the medical market, when Initiative 502 legalizing recreational weed was proposed in Washington State, Bethany was

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Lacey, a budtender at Better Buds in Silverdale, meets **Sky** on a field trip to the shop for vendor day.

wary. Thanks to being located in the Olympic rain shadow, Sequim and Port Angeles occupy a sunny oasis on the otherwise dreary peninsula and thus tend to attract retirees and older people.

As a medical marijuana provider, Bethany felt like she was really helping people deal with their pain, and a large number of their customers were living with cancer. A sufferer of migraines herself, Bethany found that cannabis was more effective and less debilitating

what happened.

"Patients were better taken care of back then," she says. "It cost less, growers made more, and retailers made more. Now everyone is making less but the state."

After 502 passed, Bethany and Justin decided it was time to diversify their business interests, and they started to get serious about falcon breeding.

Exporting birds is strictly regulated by state, federal, and international law, and in 2015, Bethany became the youngest internationally licensed falcon exporter in the world. Around the same time, Justin was approached by a dealer in the United Arab Emirates via Facebook, and now, a few times a year, their birds get flown on commercial airlines to buyers in the Persian Gulf.

In photos of one of these flights posted online, you can see a dozen or so birds—their heads covered in hoods just like the one Sky was wearing in the living room—sitting next to men in kaffiyehs on airplanes.

The two businesses, cannabis and falcon breeding, have a lot in common. In addition to the

"We only sell [pot] products we would use ourselves."

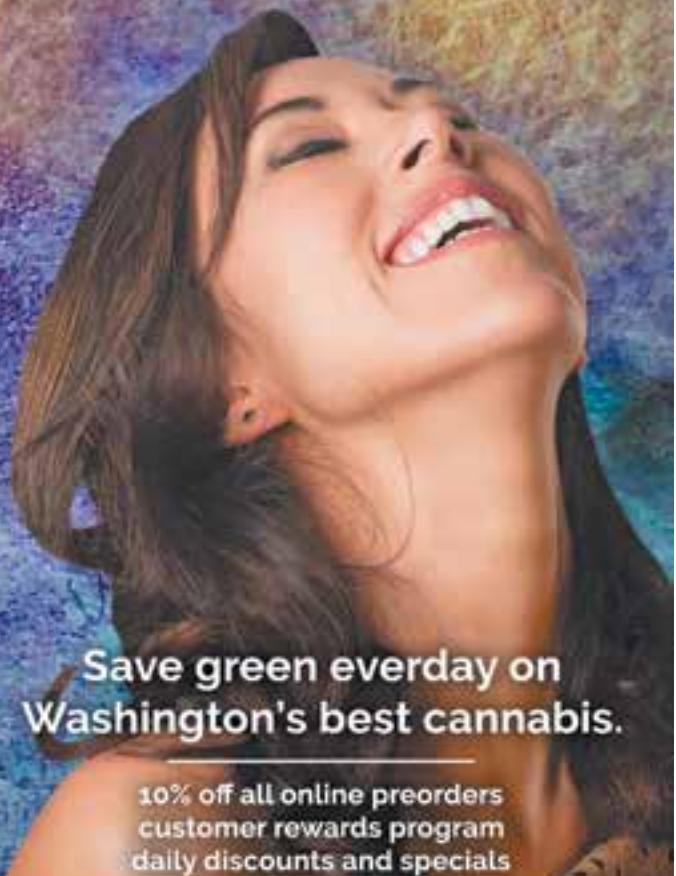
than prescription painkillers. She also knew that despite assurances from the state, if recreational weed passed, the medical market as she knew it would be over.

She even wrote a letter to her customers urging them to vote against Initiative 502, explaining that if legalization passed, the state was going to impose high taxes and the cost of weed was going to skyrocket. This is exactly

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In 2015, Bethany became the youngest internationally licensed falcon exporter in the world.

importance of genetics, both are high risk—and high reward. Falconry “is the highest high and the lowest low in the span of seconds,” Bethany says. The birds grow quickly. From the moment they hatch, it takes just 65 days for falcons to reach full size. Most, however, don’t survive. The first year, the mortality rate is 60 to 70 percent.

If one of their falcons does survive to adulthood, it’s most at risk when training or hunting.

Falcon hunting isn’t that much different from hunting with a man-made weapon. Hunters may, for example, let their dogs loose near a duck pond. The dogs flush the ducks out, and then the falconer releases the falcon, which then swoops overhead and nabs the duck out of the air. But as deadly as they are, falcons have predators of their own,

including coyotes, golden eagles, and great horned owls. The couple lost one of their own falcons to a red-tailed hawk some years ago.

“Everything has to eat,” Justin says. “There’s so much beauty in this, but it will break your heart.”

The same could be said of the cannabis market. After voters approved Initiative 502 in 2012, the state issued licenses to thousands of can-

were paying up to \$20 a gram, and growers and processors scrambled to enter the market. Some of these growers had no experience with weed, and others had no experience in business. Not even seven years after legalization passed, hundreds of producers have closed up shop.

“People didn’t realize how hard this industry was going to be,” Bethany says. “They weren’t prepared for it.”

Prices have dropped precipitously since the early days of recreational weed. Today, you can get an ounce of industrially produced flower for less than \$40. On the black market, that would have cost 8 to 10 times as much, and plenty of growers are dropping their prices to keep up. Not Falcanna.

“It’s this race to the bottom,” Bethany says, “and we’re not doing it.”

Both falconry and cannabis are high-risk and high-reward.

nabis producers and processors, including Bethany and Justin. Still, inventory was low, and in the first months of recreational pot, the price of weed skyrocketed. Customers



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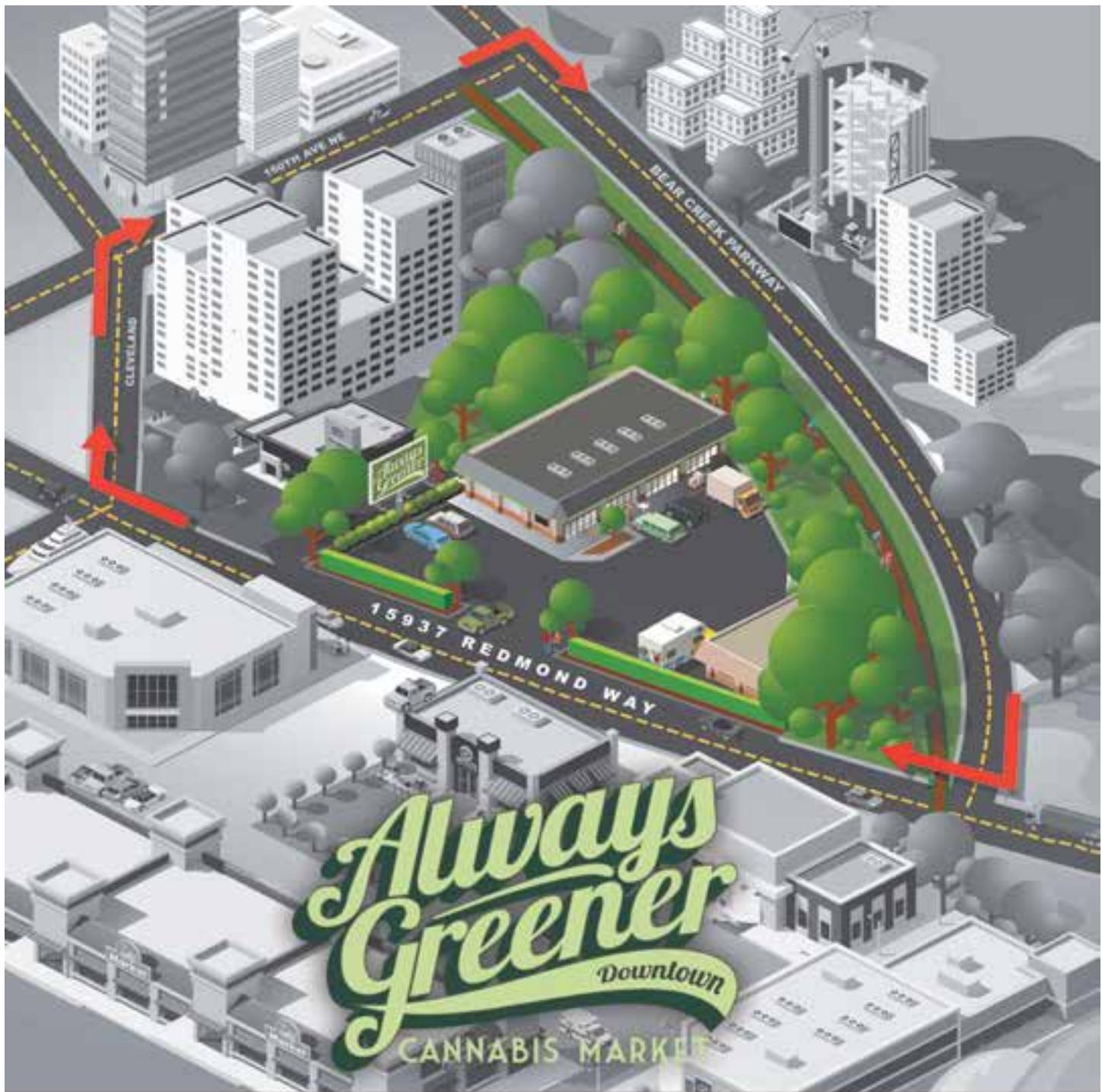


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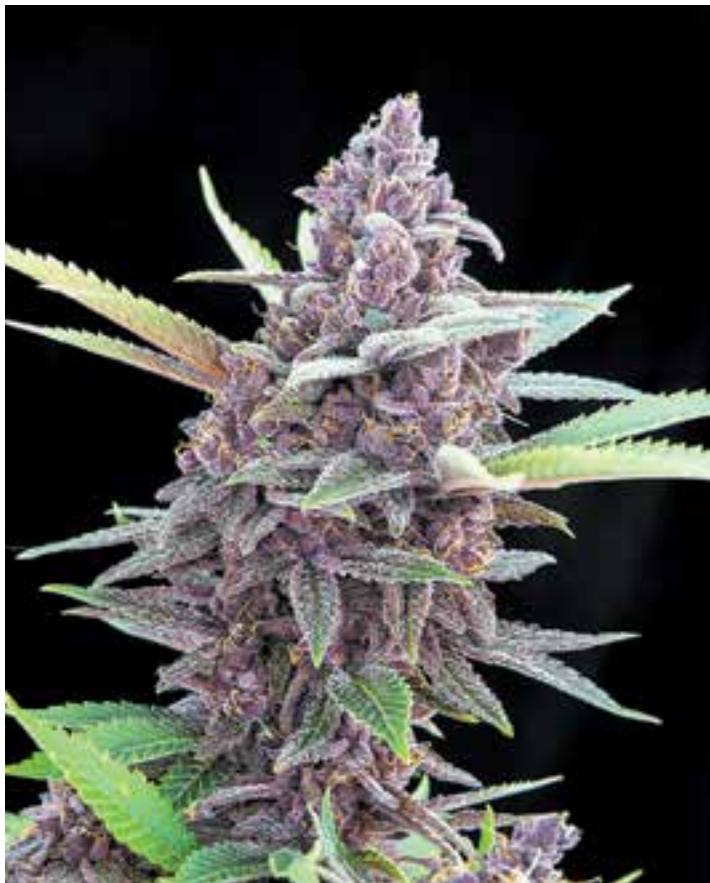
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Falcanna's Pacific Purple.

By refusing to lower their prices or compromise quality, Falcanna is well-positioned in the market. Falcanna flower, which is all pesticide-free, typically costs \$12 to \$14 a gram, or around \$300 an ounce—but you get what you pay for. Every detail of the product, from the biodegradable packaging to the hand-trimmed buds and hand-rolled joints, is deliberate. “We only sell products we would use ourselves,” Bethany tells me more than once.

On a tour of one of the company’s indoor farms, she shows me the post-curing room, where food-grade plastic bags hold pounds of fresh, fragrant cannabis. She opens up a bag of Orange Blossom, one of dozens of strains developed by Justin, and the smell of citrus fills the air. It’s like standing outside an Orange Julius.

Another strain, Pacific Purple (a cross of Pacific Blue and Purple Kush), is deeply purple and dotted

with tiny orange hairs. It smells like wine and berries. Later, it will be hand-packaged and delivered to retailers across the state.

All this attention to detail is paying off: The company has done millions in sales while other growers are failing. When I ask why they think this brand is growing while so many others have gone belly-up—is it the weed? Is it the falcons?—Justin says, without hesitation, it’s his wife.

The weed is good, but really, she’s the secret sauce in the product, he says. She brushes this off and says it’s a team effort.

After Bethany feeds the falcon in the living room—he rips through quail bone as though it were lettuce—we head down the road to see the farm, and I ask if she’s proud of what she’s accomplished. “Yes,” she says after a moment’s pause. “I always wanted to go to Japan and see a teahouse, and we did it.”



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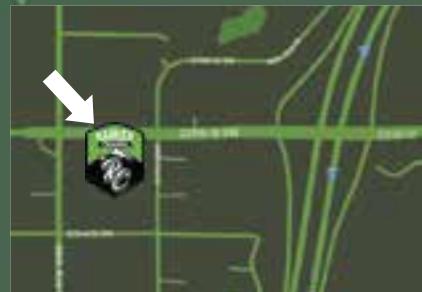
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The Untold Story of Marijuana Legalization

How billionaire George Soros and a few of his friends gave us bongs full of legal weed.

BY LESTER BLACK

t's an interesting story that few people know, and it begins with George Soros.

The year was 1992. George H.W. Bush was still in the White House—a presidency that was in many ways an extension of Ronald Reagan's two terms.

At the time, Soros, a Hungarian-born financier who had spent the 1980s donating hundreds of millions of dollars to fighting the Soviet totalitarian state in Central Europe, didn't know what his next big cause would be. Once the Soviet empire fell (and fell quickly), Soros faced a dilemma: Which oppressive government regime should he fight next?

Soros had immigrated to the United States in the 1950s. He was increasingly rich and also

increasingly alarmed about the escalating and punitive nature of the war on drugs. But was it worth fighting a battle within his newly adopted country?

He didn't know much about drug policy, so he asked one of his aides who did. His aide suggested

**The pivotal moment
was a “lively and
feisty conversation”
on a 95 degree day
in 1992.**

he meet with Ethan Nadelmann, a young Princeton professor who advocated for legal reforms. In 1992, there were few researchers

working on drug policy, but Nadelmann was one of them.

In a recent interview with *The Stranger*, Nadelmann recalled that it was a 95 degree summer day in New York City when the two of them met. Soros summoned Nadelmann to his office and the two had lunch. Nadelmann remembers the meeting being a “lively and feisty conversation,” and that it ended with Soros feeling comfortable enough with the young professor to offer him a deal.

“I see we agree on the basic issues,” Soros told Nadelmann, according to Nadelmann's recollection. “Now, I am a very busy man, but I have substantial resources. So let's assume that I want to empower you to accomplish our shared objectives.”

And with that deal, Nadelmann and Soros changed the United States forever.

TWO MONTHS LATER

Shortly after that fateful meeting, Soros made the biggest wager of his entire career: He shorted the Bank of England, betting \$10 billion that the institution would devalue its currency. When the bank unexpectedly did just that on September 16, 1992, on a day remembered as “Black Wednesday” in the United Kingdom, Soros made \$1 billion *in profit* in a single day.

The billionaire was now a mega-billionaire. He has since gone on to donate an estimated \$32 billion to various causes, but his war on the war on drugs may

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turn out to be his most effective endeavor ever.

Over the ensuing three decades, Nadelmann used Soros's cash to coordinate nationwide drug-reform initiatives and build a network of wealthy pro-pot donors. Those donors included two other billionaires: Peter Lewis, the CEO of Progressive Insurance, and John Sperling, the founder of the University of Phoenix. Nadelmann also got some cash from a Rockefeller heir, as well as from George Zimmer, the founder of Men's Wearhouse.

The three billionaires who formed the core of Nadelmann's

**Back in 1992,
80 percent of
Americans said pot
should be illegal.**

funding network—Soros, Sperling, and Lewis—spent more than \$70 million on pot reform over the next 20 years, and Nadelmann delivered a 20-year string of pot-reform victories that have pushed the United States to the precipice of full legalization.

How much credit do we owe these three billionaires? For Jonathan Caulkins, a drug policy researcher at Carnegie Mellon University, the answer is straightforward. "The simplest explanation of why marijuana reform happened is that three billionaires decided it should happen and they bankrolled the process for many, many years," Caulkins said.

Caulkins's confidence behind his claim makes a lot more sense when you realize how drastically the world has changed since Nadelmann first sat down with Soros. In 1992, nearly 80 percent of Americans said pot should be fully illegal. The war on drugs, invented by Richard Nixon and perfected by Ronald Reagan,

would soon be picked up and further exacerbated by Bill Clinton. Every aspect of popular American culture, from mainstream movies to televangelist preachers to Democratic presidents, was dead set on keeping pot illegal.

Now the tables have turned. Those baby boomers who once cheered on the war on drugs are standing in line at dispensaries so they can refill their vape cartridges. More than two-thirds of the US population lives in states that have weed-friendly laws. Ten states have legalized recreational pot and 33 states provide medical access to cannabis.

It's becoming an almost disqualifying factor in the 2020 presidential race for the Democratic nominee to not support national pot legalization. And even Republican politicians, seeing the polls showing that a majority of Republicans support legalization, are starting to support relaxing pot prohibition.

Which is all to say: We are in a drastically different place 27 years after a billionaire told a young drug policy professor that he wanted to put his "substantial" resources behind pot reform. And none of it may have happened without that help.

The money that Soros and the other wealthy men put in helped change the way the United States looks at weed. Their work on pot reform is both a story of how billionaires can force policy changes in this country and a how-to guide for political activism. Why was pot reform successful when, meanwhile, activists have made comparatively little progress on other progressive issues—from fighting climate change to reducing income inequality to rebuilding our nation's infrastructure?

It's a complicated answer with one very simple source of money. Billionaires put us on the path toward legal weed in the US. So you should probably thank Progressive Insurance, Men's Wearhouse, and

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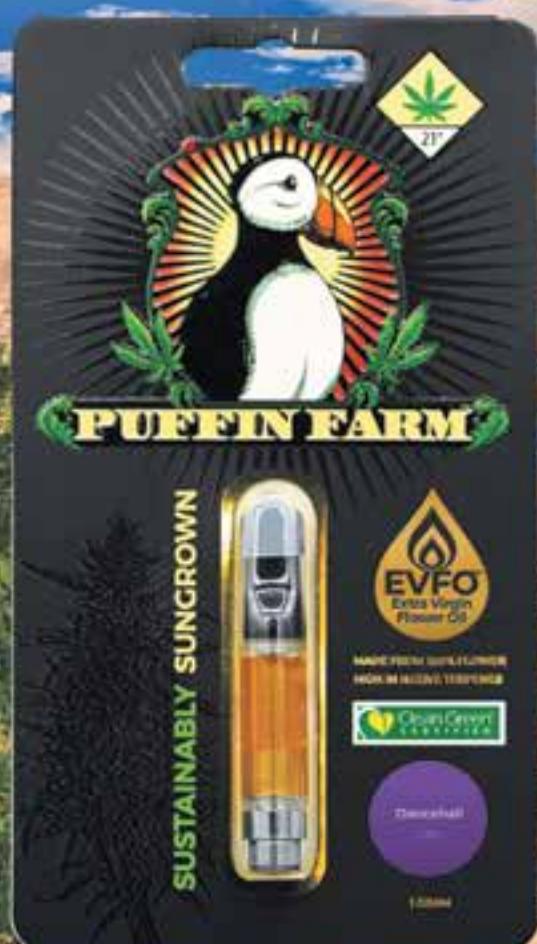
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FOUR YEARS LATER

Every stoner in America knows the number 420. But if stoners were true students of history, the number 215 would be the most famous three digits in the world of weed.

That's because, four years after Soros and Nadelmann met, a successful California voter initiative called Proposition 215 was the first major chip in the wall against pot prohibition.

When California's voters approved Proposition 215 in 1996, the state became the first in the country to legalize medical marijuana. Voters there gave pot patients and caregivers the right under state law to cultivate and possess pot if they could prove a doctor recommended pot as a treatment.

The law was the most important early win for the legalization movement. It showed that there was a winning path for pot legalization moving forward: Put the faces of the seriously ill medical users on the pot-reform movement and show that doctors supported medical marijuana. For the first time in decades, the wall of prohibition, backed in a big way by

federal bureaucracy, showed signs of weakness.

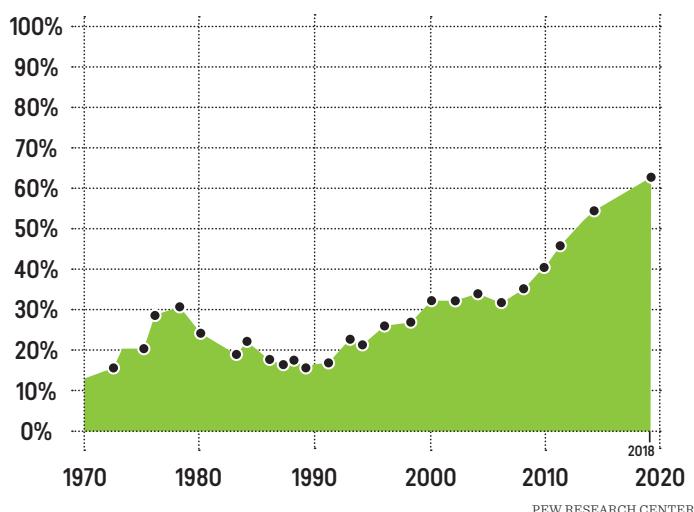
Again, without George Soros's money, it probably would have never happened.

Proposition 215 needed about 700,000 signatures to get on the ballot. But by December of 1995, with the deadline approaching, the initiative's creator, Dennis Peron, had collected only about 25,000 signatures. That's when Ed Rosenthal, a longtime marijuana grower and activist, called Nadelmann and asked if he could persuade Soros to help out.

Eventually, Nadelmann convinced Soros to contribute \$500,000. And not only that, he also recruited Zimmer and Lewis to contribute or raise half a million dollars each. Nadelmann had started to embrace his role of bringing together ultra-wealthy men to fight for pot reform.

"They didn't know one another," Nadelmann told me. "My role by and large was to get George Soros, Peter Lewis, and George Zimmer into the three-way partnership. It wasn't going to work unless we raised the money. So then the question is this: Would Peter Lewis have been willing to come in if George [Soros] wasn't involved? Would George Zimmer get involved without George [Soros]? He was very

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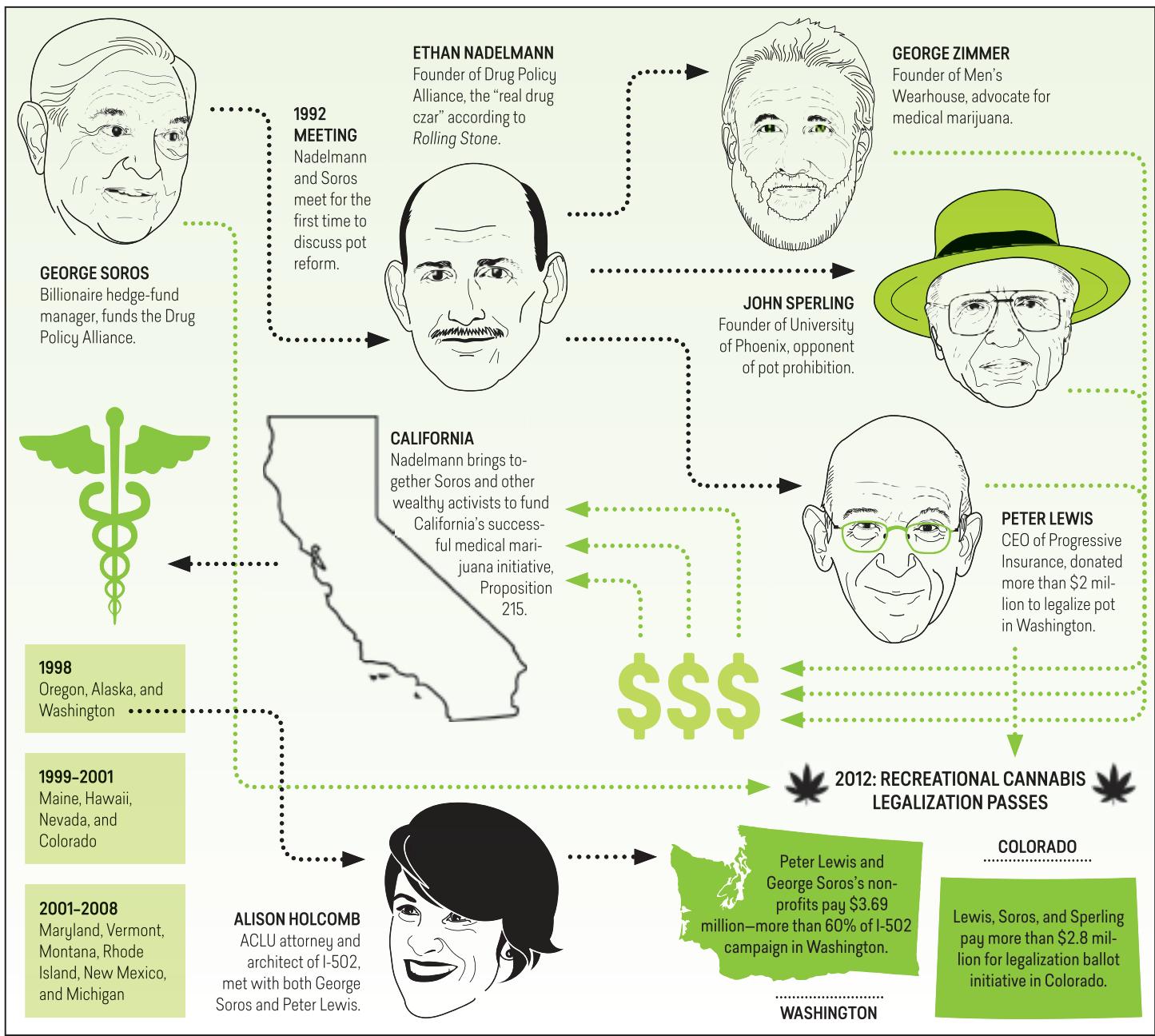


PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY JESSICA STEIN

personally committed, but I don’t think he was going to put up that much funding. He was not inclined to go it alone and really wanted to be in partnership with George [Soros]. Once George [Soros] said yes, I could call Peter and call George Zimmer and say George [Soros] would fund this.”

Nadelmann said he intentionally tried to stay out of the media spotlight because it “wouldn’t look good for someone in a New York office to be orchestrating that.”

But he also kept working away. At one point, it started to look like the campaign still needed more money, and that’s when Nadelmann convinced another wealthy New Yorker, Laurance Rockefeller, the grandson of oil tycoon John D. Rockefeller, to donate \$50,000.

Nadelmann’s fundraising worked. Proposition 215’s supporters were able to hire a professional campaign manager and signature gatherers and get the measure on the ballot. Supporters recruited

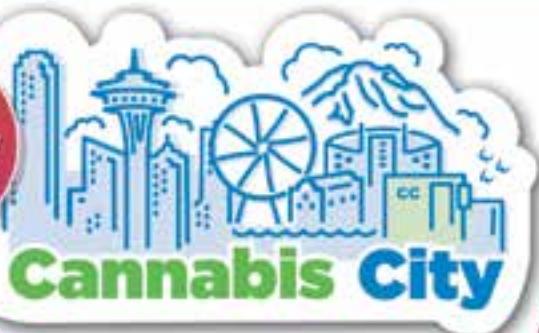
AIDS and MS patients and their doctors to be the face of the campaign. California’s voters were convinced: Proposition 215 passed with more than 55 percent of the vote. For the first time in modern history, an American state gave people a clear legal right to grow and possess pot.

Keep in mind just how deeply unpopular drugs and pot were in the 1990s. This was the peak of the war on drugs, when both Democrats and Republicans were

trying to outdo each other on how punitive they could make crime laws. Ronald Reagan had increased federal expenditures on drug control from \$1.5 billion in 1981 to \$6.6 billion in 1989, according to a 2003 study published by Peter Reuter in the peer-reviewed journal *Crime and Justice*.

The average time served in federal prison for drug crimes went from two years in 1980 to more than six years in 1992, according to Reuter. While drug sentences

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continued to increase, so did the number of inmates serving time for drug offenses in federal jails. The number of “cell years” being served for drug offenses in federal jails went from 4,500 (in 1980) to 85,000 (in 1992) to 135,000 (in 2001).

And the leadership of President Bill Clinton only made things worse. During his time in office, from 1993 to 2001, the number of federal prisoners serving time for drug offenses went from 35,398 in 1992 to 63,898 in 2000, according to Reuter’s study.

The general public was overwhelmingly in favor of these punitive drug policies. The country had recently gone through a profound shift in public opinion against pot. In 1978, 30 percent of Americans thought pot should be legalized. But by 1990, support for legalization had dropped to just 17 percent, according to the Pew Research Center.

Why was pot so unpopular in the 1980s and 1990s? According to Caulkins, the Carnegie Mellon professor, we can largely blame the baby boomers.

“The baby boomers had teenagers at home, and one of the strongest predictions of opposition to legalization is whether or not you have kids at home,” Caulkins said.

This was the era of peak family time for baby boomers, defined as people who were between the ages of 26 and 44 in 1990. Reagan’s message that pot was a gateway drug to crack, that it was physically damaging, and that it was deeply immoral resonated with many of these young parents.

The trend would eventually reverse. By 2013, when baby boomers were between the ages of 49 and 67, 50 percent of them supported legalization. That’s a surprising turn—generally speaking, people become more conservative as they age, not more progressive. So what changed to convince baby boomers to chill out about weed?

Medical marijuana initiatives,

starting with California’s Proposition 215, convinced people that Reagan and Clinton were lying about pot.

“The medical marijuana movement reduced the stigma,” Reuter told *The Stranger* in an interview. “If it was plausible as a medicine, it was less likely to be kept illegal. I think it just confers a respectability to the drug—if this drug is med-

When Bill Clinton was president, drug incarcerations doubled.

icine, it can’t be that dangerous.”

In Proposition 215, Nadelmann had delivered his first major victory for pot reform, four years after making a deal with Soros.

And he kept pushing ahead.

Two years after California legalized medical marijuana, voters in Oregon, Alaska, and Washington followed suit.

By 2008, 13 states had legalized some form of medical marijuana and Nadelmann’s three billionaires—Soros, Lewis, and Sperling—had spent \$15.7 million pushing for medical initiatives. That figure comes from an analysis by the non-profit National Families in Action, which opposes marijuana reform. National Families in Action paints the billionaires’ involvement as a subversion of democracy, and as an attempt by wealthy people to create an industry they can make money from.

But Caulkins, who himself is often critical of the legalization movement, said it’s unfair to say that these billionaires were acting only out of self-interest.

“I don’t think these billionaires were doing this because they thought they were going to profit from it,” Caulkins said. “I think they were genuinely believing they were going to make the world a better place.”

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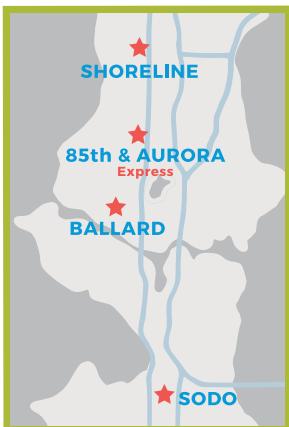
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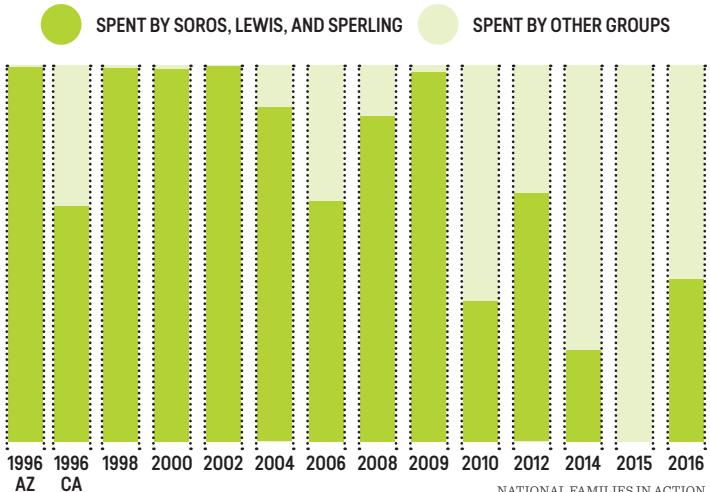
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BILLIONAIRES BUYING POT REFORM

Proportion of funds for legalization donated by Soros, Lewis, and Sperling.



Jolene Forman, a staff attorney at the Drug Policy Alliance, the organization that Nadelmann founded and that Soros uses to fund marijuana initiatives, agreed that billionaires were integral to the movement. But so was the larger social-justice argument for legalization.

"You have people really doing this work for human-rights reasons, so I think it's a gross oversimplification to say that just because three donors donated that's why the laws are this way," Forman said. "You're not [working on pot reform initiatives] because you're paid big bucks. You're doing it because you think the war is a failure, that black and brown people have been unequally harmed by our federal drug policies and their enforcement."

That's one of the powerful aspects of the pot-reform movement: It had big donors to help pay for things, but also a growing group of social-justice advocates who formed a grassroots constituency. This combination of billionaire funds and passionate activists turned into a winning formula for medical marijuana.

And as access to medical marijuana spread, it only increased acceptance of the drug. Nadelmann told me that internal polling

conducted during these ballot measures showed that the strongest predictor for supporting legalization was if a voter knew someone who had personally used medical marijuana to treat a condition. That was a stronger predictor than if someone had either personally smoked pot or knew someone who smoked pot.

And that, of course, goes back to that first time voters were exposed to the idea of medical marijuana: Proposition 215.

"Prop 215 really helped transform the popular media image of cannabis reform, from the 17-year-old high-school dropout with hemp leaves in his blond dreadlocks to some older people struggling with chemotherapy or MS or AIDS wasting syndrome or some other medical condition," Nadelmann told me.

But while the media and the public got increasingly on board with pot reform, mainstream politicians stayed stubbornly resistant to change.

The Clinton administration called Proposition 215 a "falsely labeled, cynical initiative." After the law passed, the administration started aggressively going after physicians who recommended pot, arguing that they were violating federal law by recommending



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an illegal, Schedule 1 substance.

A few billionaires had been able to help convince California's voters to recognize medical marijuana, but the pot-reform movement was still far away from the ultimate goal: total legalization.

TWENTY YEARS LATER

For Alison Holcomb, the ACLU attorney who wrote Initiative 502 and ran the campaign for Washington State's groundbreaking pot legalization, there was no single moment that led to Washington legalizing pot in 2012. Instead, there had been incremental progress in the 20 years since Soros and Nadelmann hatched their master plan.

"If I were going to try to break it down at this point, I would have to paint a picture of some sort of domino arrangement where it's not just one single line of dominoes but one of those beautiful fancy arranged domino setups where multiple lines converge and the power builds," Holcomb recently told me.

Holcomb pointed out a long list of people and movements that led up to Washington voters deciding to legalize recreational cannabis with more than 55 percent of the vote.

There was the medical marijuana movements that showed how pot reform could reduce "the pain and suffering of other human beings." There was the decriminalization movements that showed the sky wouldn't fall if cops stopped arresting people for pot. Holcomb also pointed to the work of Vivian McPeak and the pot rally he organizes in Seattle every summer called Hempfest, as well as the writings of Dominic Holden, a former news editor at *The Stranger* who frequently wrote about the social-justice argument for legalization.

Holcomb also acknowledged Peter Lewis and George Soros, who together funded more than 60 percent of the Initiative 502 campaign.

"Peter Lewis was critical. Drug Policy Alliance and Ethan Nadelmann accessing the resources that he had available was critical. It's a political campaign, and being able to get your message out to folks is really important," Holcomb said. "I think that back then it was necessary to have those resources to talk to voters, because I don't know if we would have gotten over the hump [without that money]."

The two billionaires contributed a combined \$3.69 million to the Washington State campaign, with Soros's money coming through a \$1.6 million donation from the Drug Policy Alliance, which receives most of its funding from Soros. Initiative 502 also received \$450,000 from Rick Steves, the travel writer and television host, and Steves's company, Rick Steves' Europe.

The billionaires' involvement in Washington State's I-502 came in the midst of a 10-year spending spree on pot legalization initiatives.

Soros, Lewis, and Sperling spent \$2.8 million on Colorado's successful legalization initiative in 2012.

Travel writer Rick Steves donated \$450,000 to I-502.

After their success in Washington and Colorado, the three billionaires went on to spend \$5.9 million in Oregon's 2014 successful legalization initiative.

In 2016, the trio dropped tens of millions of dollars: \$2.3 million in Arizona, \$6.1 million in Massachusetts, \$3 million in Maine, and a whopping \$22.8 million in California to bring that state to full recreational cannabis legalization. Combined with earlier spending on medical marijuana initiatives, the three spent \$71.3 million from 1996 to 2016 on pot reform alone.

The advertisement for Millennium Green Cannabis features a large circular logo at the top with the letters 'MG' in the center, surrounded by the words 'MILLENNIUM GREEN'. Below the logo, the text 'MILLENNIUM GREEN' is written in large, bold, white letters. A central graphic area contains the word '- WINNER -' in yellow, followed by '2018 DOPE CUP' in bold black letters. Two gold trophy icons are shown next to the text 'Best Indoor Indica-Dominant Flower' and 'Best CBD Lice Resin'. Below this, another section is titled '2019 TERPESTIVAL' with two gold trophy icons and the text 'Best CBD Flower-Fruit Type' and 'Best CBD Flower-Floral Type'. At the bottom, the text 'Washington's Finest Organically Grown Cannabis' is displayed above a 'Clean Green CERTIFIED' logo. A list of partner dispensaries is provided, and a disclaimer at the bottom states: 'This product has intoxicating effects and may be habit forming. Marijuana can impair coordination, coordination, and judgment. Do not operate a vehicle or machinery under the influence of this drug. There may be health risks associated with consumption of this product. For use only by adults twenty-one and older. Keep out of the reach of children.' A final call-to-action at the bottom reads 'FOR MORE INFO VISIT: WWW.MILLENNIUM.GREEN'.

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Each one of these legalization successes made it easier for a new state to legalize pot.

"We are one country; we share one media culture. So when one state does something, that absolutely influences thinking around the country and around the world," Caulkins told me. "I also agree that the absence of the sky falling, most specifically with adolescent use, was huge in assuring people."

Legalization also brought another argument for pot reform

As of 2019, 10 states have legalized recreational weed, and 33 have medical.

to the forefront: tax revenue.

When Colorado and Washington started collecting tax revenue on legal weed, it established concretely that taxing and regulating the former black-market product was a guaranteed revenue source. Cash-strapped governments were taking notice.

Tax revenue became another argument in the increasingly long list of reasons to legalize. And this long list—which includes social-justice issues like the unfair impact of criminalization on people of color as well as libertarian issues like not wanting the government to block adults from using a mostly safe substance—appeals to people with a wide variety of political orientations.

Everyone from moderates to libertarians to socialists can find a way to get behind the issue, which is one of the reasons legalization has been so successful, according to Ekow Yankah, a law school professor and political theorist. Yankah wrote a 2011 article predicting the continued spread of pot reform—not because of opinion polls or the amount of money billionaires were putting behind

it, but because of the philosophy of pot reform.

"The core of my argument is that philosophy matters. If you find something where there are a bunch of views that all coalesce around one philosophical position... it makes it much harder to keep it at bay," Yankah told me. "I think it was people stepping back and saying no matter what your underpinning, you can't find a good way to support this [prohibition]."

As the number of states with legal and medical pot increase every year, there remains just one glaring barricade against true pot reform: the federal government. Pot is still a Schedule 1 controlled substance under federal law, meaning it is considered one of the most illegal drugs in the country, more dangerous than meth. So it must be said: Even after more than \$70 million, those billionaires have yet to truly accomplish complete pot reform.

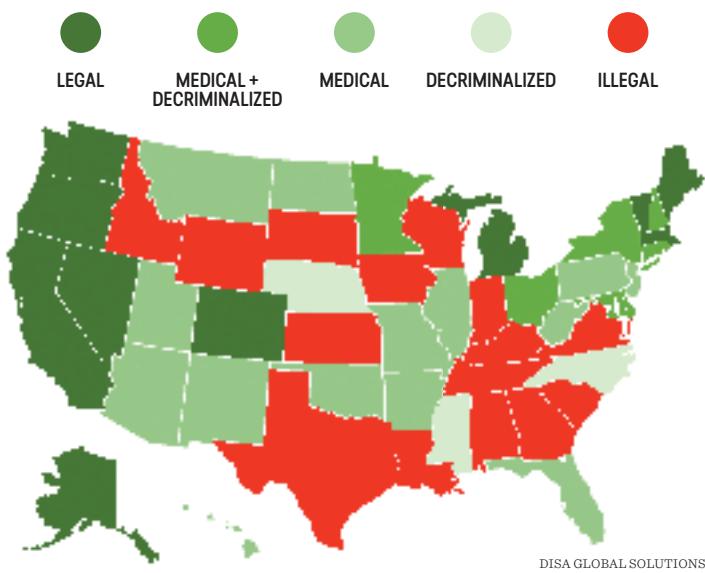
TWENTY-SEVEN YEARS LATER

Nearly 27 years have passed since that young professor from Princeton sat down with that billionaire in New York City and asked him to support pot reform. Neither of them could have predicted they were setting off a chain of events that would forever change the way the world looks at pot.

As of this writing, 10 states and Washington, DC, have legalized recreational weed. Medical marijuana is legal in 33 states, including deeply conservative places like Utah and Oklahoma. Two countries, Uruguay and Canada, have fully legalized pot, and it looks like the march of pot legalization has become an inevitability.

Would that march toward full legalization have happened without the support of those three billionaires?

Caulkins said he thought pot reform would have still happened,



Legalization by state as of March 2019.

but it would have taken a different route. "I think that absent that sort of driving force, you would have instead had a liberalization that took the form of reduced penalties and decriminalization, possibly extending to home grows but not to a legal for-profit industry," Courier said.

Legalization has spawned a multibillion-dollar industry. It appears to be growing at an almost limitless clip. Two pot research companies, Arcview Market Research and BDS Analytics, estimate that the global pot industry will grow from \$6.9 billion in revenue in 2017 to \$16.9 billion in revenue in 2019 to more than \$31 billion in 2022. Other analysts, like Cowen Inc., have predicted even bigger figures, estimating that the global industry could be worth more than \$50 billion in sales by 2026.

Nadelmann told me that he thought it was unavoidable that pot reform would lead to for-profit involvement.

"Legalization was inevitably going to mean this industry was going to be taken over by bigger corporations. We live in the most dynamic capitalistic society in history. There was no reason that wasn't going to happen," he said.

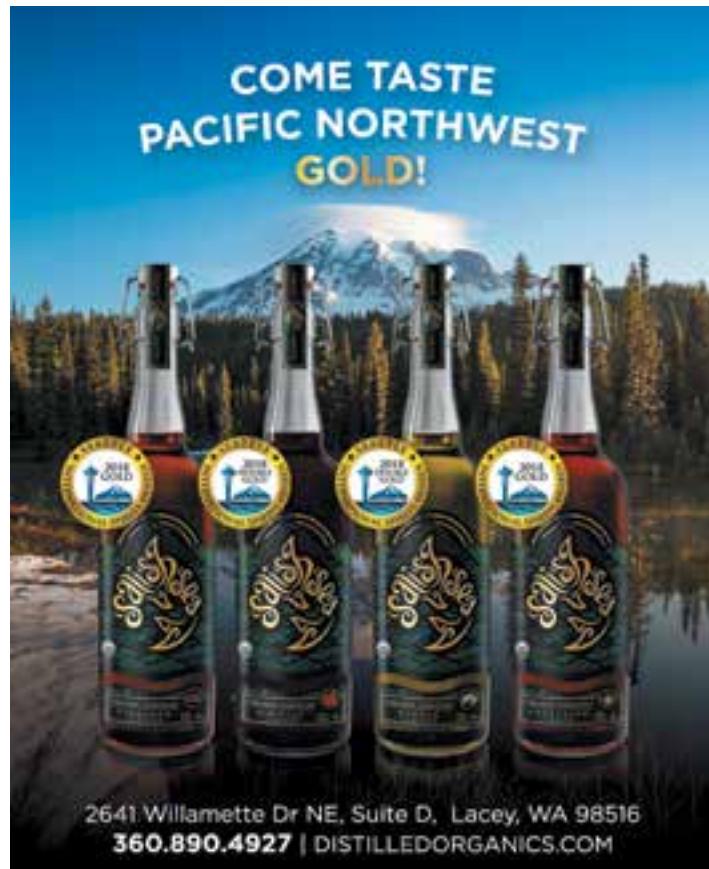
Nadelmann was adamant that

even though the work of pot-reform advocates has led to a massive industry, those capitalist interests played a minimal role in most of the reform movement's history. Also, none of the three billionaires own a cannabis business. They really weren't in it to profit from it.

"I know from very deep personal experience that for-profit interests played essentially no role in marijuana legalization until 2016," Nadelmann said.

And even if some rich people are getting richer off of legal pot, legalization is still having a positive impact on society as a whole. For Nadelmann, who has been interviewed on *The Colbert Report* and described in *Rolling Stone* as "the real drug czar," but who is now in semi-retirement, the feelings are nearly entirely positive.

"Marijuana legalization is more or less unstoppable now, so that gives me a sense of tremendous pride," Nadelmann told me. "I remember when I started off on this thing 30 years ago as a professor at Princeton. People thought I was just on some quixotic mission or trying to accomplish the ultimate hippie objective... It's nice to be stepping back at this time in my life and feel like we had a monumental success."



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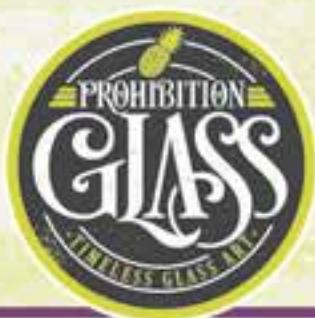
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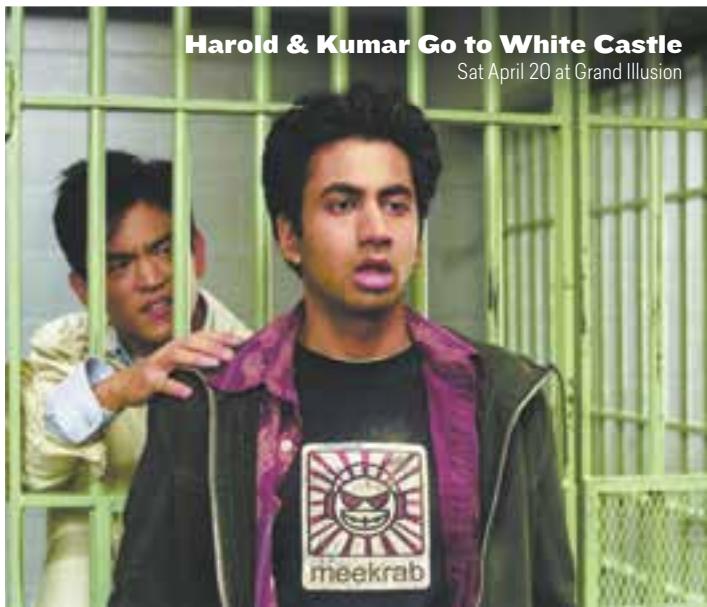


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THINGS TO DO → 4/20 and Beyond



Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle
Sat April 20 at Grand Illusion

4/20

STONER SHOWS & PERFORMANCES

★ Am I Right, Ladies?

The West Coast has always been a purveyor of "acid drag," thanks largely to the Cockettes, San Francisco's LSD-fueled hippie drag queens who occasionally used Divine as a muse in the early 1970s. Their impact still lingers in the region, and I'd argue that Michete, Seattle's raunchy DIY rapper who's become a hit maker for Tumblr teens, presents a sort of low-fi, punk acid drag that's completely wild, stupid, and really fun. Her curating skills will be on full display with this "unhinged psychedelic 4/20 spiral" featuring drag, DJs, live music, art, and photography. I suggest going to this very, very stoned. **CHASE BURNS** (Kremwerk, Sat April 20, 10 pm, \$10/\$15).

Bad Therapy Presents The 420 Show

Bad Therapy and guest improv troupes Wood For Sheep, Dead Letters, and TrlO will celebrate the holiday with goofy antics and plenty of references to the devil's lettuce. (*The Pocket Theater*, Sat April 20, 5:30 pm, \$10/\$14.)

Bubble Pop

Kylie Mooncakes will host a night of wild drag antics to J- and K-pop. (*Timbre Room*, Sat April 20, 7 pm, \$8/\$12.)

★ Cheech & Chong

That's right, here's a chance to witness the legendary stoner comedy duo in the flesh and THC-laced blood. (*Emerald Queen Casino*, Sat April 20, 8:30 pm, \$45-\$105 (*sold out*)).

★ Cucci's Spooky Weed

What could be spookier than spending 4/20 stoned with Cucci Binaca? Binaca, a mis-

chievous ringleader in Seattle's drag scene, is potty-mouthed, perpetually stoned, and the conservative right's worst nightmare, which makes her a favorite here at *The Stranger*. In Cucci's Spooky Weed, she invites drag performers to create numbers that are both spooky and stoned, and it's a riot (sometimes literally). Get hella high before you go, and be prepared for performers who are more likely to spend their number bleeding onto a canvas than lip-synching to Britney Spears. **CHASE BURNS** (Kremwerk, Sat April 20, 8 pm, \$10.)

★ The Dope Show

Tyler Smith presents the Dope Show, which offers two performances by a lineup of comedians: one delivered sober, then another delivered several (smoky) minutes later, totally baked. (*Historic Everett Theater*, Sat April 20, 8 pm, \$20/\$25.)

Let's Make a Dope Deal! with Weedin

The ganja-obsessed magician Weedin will host a "probably rigged" and intentionally pointless game show with contestants from the audience. (*The Pocket Theater*, Fri April 19, 10 pm, \$10/\$14.)

★ Stoner Chicks

Very funny stoned and sober women comedians Phoebe Richards (often seen at ComedySportz), Kayla Teel (often seen at Jet City Improv), Stephani Thompson (ditto), and indie darling Grace Penzell will act out silly stories about all the best things in life: pizza, hookups, and weed. (*The Pocket Theater*, Sun April 21, 7 pm, \$10/\$14.)

That 420 Show

Wrap up 4/20 with trippy drag artists, boy-lesque dancers, hula hoopers, aerial acrobats, and other denizens of the variety world. (*Rendezvous*, Sat April 20, 9:30 pm, \$25-\$45.)



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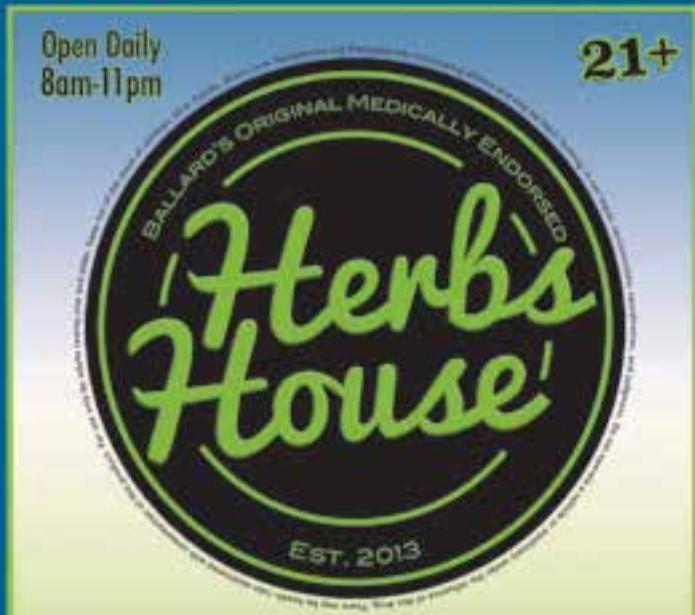
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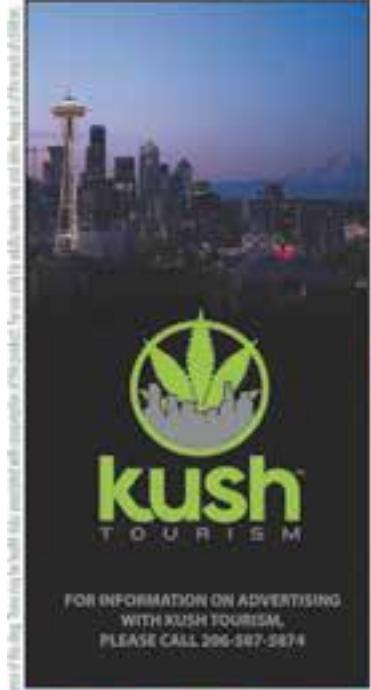
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The stoner WOC collective Women. Weed. WiFi will design a "Sanctuary of the Modern Divine Feminine," a bedroom full of art and artifacts of their work concerning "cannabis, music, publishing, holistic healing, and social justice." (*Mount Analogue*, \$5, through April 30.)

STONER MOVIES

★ Harold & Kumar Go to White Castle
The Seattle Asian American Film Festival will co-present this beautifully dumb classic on your favorite holiday (at 4:20, no less). "You've been out cold for the past half hour, I figured if I did some gay shit you'd wake up." (*Grand Illusion*, Sat April 20, 4:20 pm, \$10.)

SPLIFF Film Fest

Hey stoners, have you heard the most important news of 2019? (Big claim, but definitely true.) We're baking up a trippy new film festival! The creators of HUMP! and Savage Love have created SPLIFF. It's the world's first film festival created by the stoned for the stoned. Expect trippy films, comedic shorts, quickie documentaries, parodies of anti-pot educational films (think *Reefer Madness*), total mind-fucks, and maybe even some pot-influenced actual fucks. (21+ only, thanks!) **CHASE BURNS** (SIFF Cinema Egyptian, April 19–20, 7 pm, 9:30 pm, \$20.)

SPLIFF After-Party

Present your SPLIFF ticket to get into this after-party sponsored by The Reef Cannabis, which will feature performances by Sam Lachow, Nacho Picasso, Tim Kennedy, and Flight x Headtrips DJs. The Reef Cannabis' partners Millennium Extracts, Royal Tree Gardens, Solstice, and Olala will all be on-site to party with us, too. (*Fred Wildlife Refuge*, Fri April 19, 8:30 pm.)

STONER CONCERTS

4/20 at Tim's

Spend 4/20 with live hiphop acts 2Xtim, Seasicc, Onasis, Pomp Eii factor, Yh, Fresh and Merce, S.A.T.H.I.N., Mazar Robbie, Za Q the

Cut, and Mcprimitive. (*Tim's Tavern*, Sat April 20, 9 pm, \$10.)

4/20 Reggae Party with the Pilchuck Boyz
Local group Pilchuck Boyz will bring you a reggae-filled 4/20. (*Decibel Brewing*, Sat April 20, 7–9 pm, free.)

4:20 SNAP '90s Dance Party
Experience the '90s in a parallel universe wherein weed was already legal in Washington by getting stoned and dancing to hits of the decade with Trashy Trash DJs Ben Meadow, MadMax, and Introcut, plus Portland's Colin Jones. (*Lo-Fi Performance Gallery*, Sat April 20, 9 pm, \$10.)

Black Magic Flower Power, Great Electric Quest, Disenchanter
"Quality boogie rock" band Black Magic Flower Power will be joined by Great Electric Quest and Disenchanter for an evening of pre-4/20 danceable riffs. (*Central Saloon*, Wed April 17, 8 pm, \$8.)

Brass Monkeys, Spyn Reset, Gypsy Temple
Brass Monkeys are a Beastie Boys tribute group who, we've been assured, have a valid license to ill. They'll be joined by Spyn Reset and Gypsy Temple at this 4/20 cover show of hits and deep cuts. (*Central Saloon*, Sat April 20, 8 pm, \$10/\$12.)

Bread & Butter, the Shivas, Dean Johnson
Former *Stranger* music critic Emily Nokes has praised local power-pop group Bread & Butter for their "no problemo rock and roll." Chillax to their sounds after additional sets from the Shivas (who Dave Segal called "K Records' great psych-rock hope") and Dean Johnson (of Lowman Palace and Sons of Rainier). (*Tractor Tavern*, Sat April 20, 8 pm, \$10.)

Bumpin' Uglies, Perfect By Tomorrow
Bumpin' Uglies—who describe themselves as "lyrically driven ska/punk/reggae from the East Coast"—will roll through town on their Catch My Buzz Tour with support from fellow reggae-rockers Perfect By Tomorrow. (*High Dive*, Sat April 20, 9 pm, \$12/\$15.)

Cultivate Launch: Calyx & Teebee
Get into some 4/20-appropriate drum and bass with Calyx and TeeBee, who will be joined by S-Doobie, SmartBomb, and Spiralus. (*Substation*, Sat April 20, 9 pm, \$20.)

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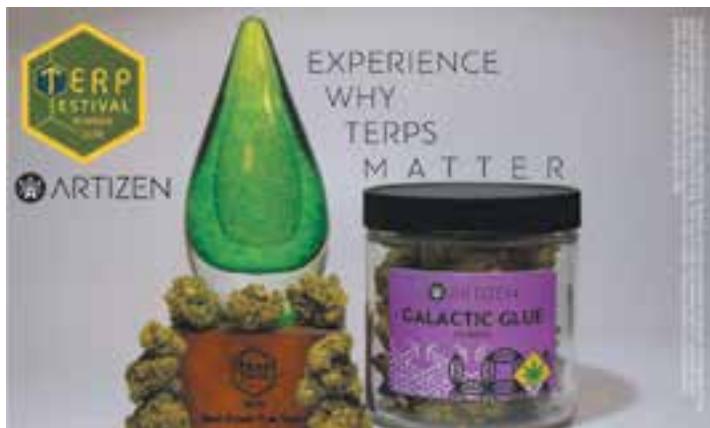
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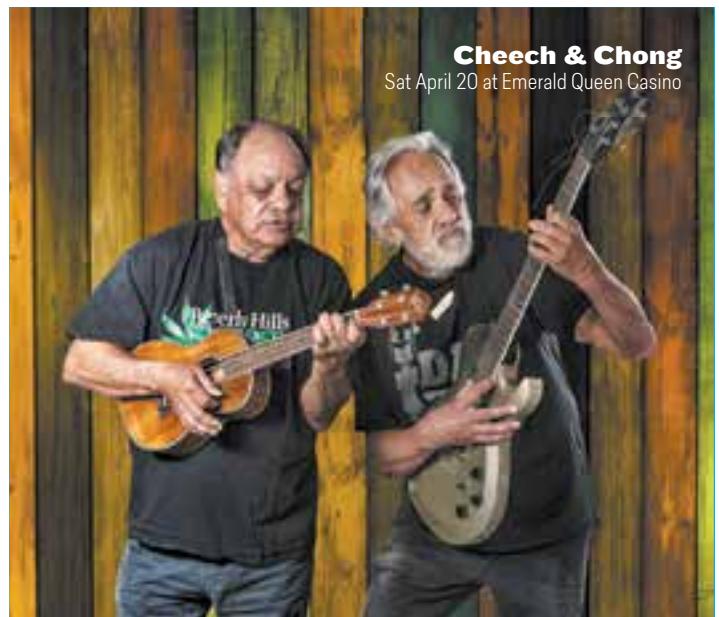
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The Expendables, Pacific Roots

Laid-back Santa Cruz surf-rockers the Expendables also bring their own brand of reggae, punk, and '80s-inspired dueling guitar solos to the stage. They'll be joined by ska band Pacific Roots, who are also from stoner haven Santa Cruz. (*Crocodile, Thurs April 18, 8 pm, \$22/\$25*)

★ The Floozies, Biocratic

Straight outta funk hotbed Lawrence, Kansas, the Floozies revel in the deep pleasures of post-Parliament funkitude, worshipping at the altar of George Clinton, Bernie Worrell, and Bootsy Collins. Subtle as the latter's stage costumes, the Floozies (brothers Matt and Mark Hill on guitar and drums, respectively) rudely thrust into your earholes some of the most bulbous bass frequencies ever heard from one of America's flyover states. There's a cartoonish, day-glo aura about the songs on their album *Do Your Thing* (no relation to the Isaac Hayes song on the *Shaft* soundtrack), and if you're not dancing and orgyng by the end of it, the Floozies will be very disappointed. These wide-lapelled funketeers so badly want to be your freak of the week, and they break many sweats trying to achieve this. (*DAVE SEGAL (Neptune Theatre, Fri April 19, 7 pm, \$47-\$202.)*)

★ Mike Love, Sarah Christine

Hawaiian roots rock/reggae artist Mike Love will bring his "genre-conscious" tunes to Seattle with support from Sarah Christine. (*Crocodile, Fri April 19, 8 pm, \$20.*)

Panoramics, Jaguar Paw, New Rose

Local power-poppers Panoramics will celebrate 4/20 at this special show with support from punks Jaguar Paw and NYC's New Rose. (*The Funhouse, Sat April 20, 9 pm, \$6/\$8.*)

Pigs on the Wing - A Tribute to Pink Floyd

Portland-based Pink Floyd tribute band Pigs on the Wing will perform the legendary psych band's seminal 1977 album *Animals* in its entirety. (*Columbia City Theater, Fri April 12, 8 pm, \$20/\$25.*)

Sammy J

Australian-born and New Zealand-bred musician Sammy J blends soul, jazz, and "island reggae." Join him on this stop on his Moonlight Run Tour. (*Neptune Theatre, Fri April 19, 8 pm, \$24/\$29.*)

Seattle PsyOps: Four Year Anniversary

This recurring psych-trance night will celebrate four years around the sun. (*Substation, Fri April 19, 9 pm-2 am.*)

★ Tech N9ne, Krizz Kaliko, Dax, Mayday, Ubi

Hip hop legend and frequent PNW visitor Tech N9ne will bring his many evolutions back to Seattle for a night on his 2019 It Goes Up Tour with opening guests Krizz Kaliko, Dax, Mayday, and Ubi of CES CRU. (*Showbox Sodo, Fri April 19, 8 pm, \$33/\$35.*)



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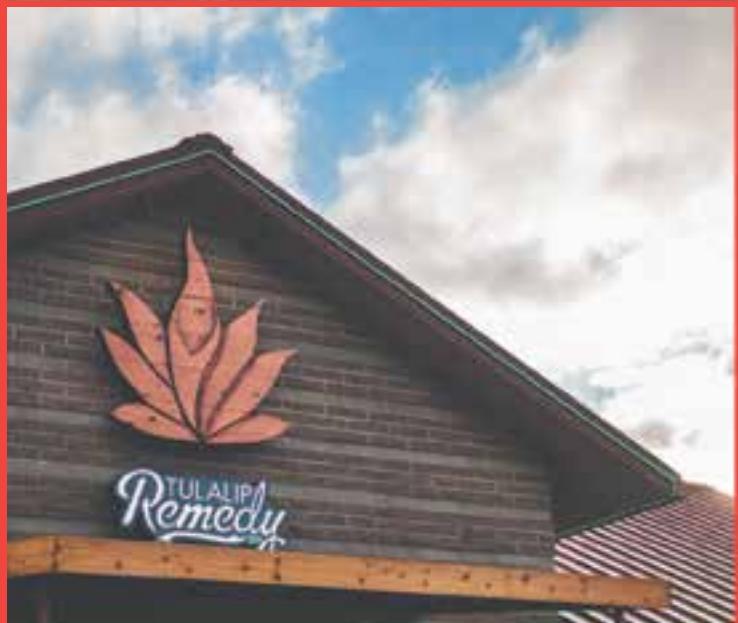
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WEED, SSDD, Beverly Crusher, Xurs
Stranger contributor Zach Frimmel has described Bainbridge Island's WEED as "a guided meditation interrupted with chaos." They'll be joined by fellow experimental rockers/punks SSDD, Beverly Crusher, and Xurs. (*Substation, Fri April 12, 8:30 pm, \$10/\$15.*)

Wreckage Seattle

Sign up for a full night of dance music and get "ready to get WRECKED" with Pegboard Nerds, G-Rex, Eliminate, Chime, P0gman, Dack Janiels, BloodThinnerz, Sir Kutz, Titus1, Alex Bosi, and Starla. (*Showbox Soda, Sat April 20, 7:30 pm, \$35-\$45.*)

OTHER STONER EVENTS

420Fest

Seattle Hempfest will host their annual membership festival to gain new members (their primary source of funds). Enjoy food, music, live entertainment, raffles, and conversations about the future of the pot industry. (*Culture Yard, Sat April 20, 3-10 pm, \$15-\$200.*)

Ganja Yoga

Get uber relaxed at this yoga class for stoners, where you'll hang out at a "smoking social" before diving into an all-levels class. Your ticket also gets you a discount on products at Lux (just show your budtender your event receipt). (*Kula Movement, Sat April 13, 6:30-8:30 pm, \$30.*)

★ IPA Daze

Get dazed and confused at this two-day celebration of all things IPA with more than 30 IPAs on tap (including special collaboration brews with other Washington breweries), snacks to sate your munchies, and even baby goats. A portion of proceeds benefit the Surfrider Foundation of Washington. (*Redhook Brewlab, April 20-22, free.*)

★ Laser 420

The Laser Dome is already a stoner go-to, but they'll fully embrace the holiday vibes with a night of psychedelic tunes synced to trippy light beams. (*Laser Dome at Pacific Science Center, Sat April 20, 10:30 pm, \$14.*)

Seattle Tokeativity Social: Flower Power

The women-focused cannabis networking event Tokeativity aims to "empower women at the root level" and advocate for the normalization of pot. At this event, you're invited to wear your "hippiest" '70s-inspired garb, make a flower crown, and trade your old pipes for new ones. (*Secret location downtown, Fri April 19, 7-10 pm, \$25/\$30.*)

MAY-AUGUST

STONER CONCERTS

311, Dirty Heads, the Interrupters, Dreamers, Bikini Trill

Get that sun-drenched alt-reggae-rock sound from 311 and Dirty Heads as they tour through the Northwest this summer with support sets from the Interrupters, Dreamers, and Bikini Trill. (*White River Amphitheatre, Sun Aug 18, 5:45 pm.*)

Dave Matthews Band

Birkenstock-rock legend and #1 dad bod Dave Matthews performs all three days of Labor Day weekend for the 28th anniversary of his band and in promotion of his latest studio album. (*Gorge Amphitheatre, Aug 30-Sept 1, 5 pm, \$50+.*)

Dead & Company

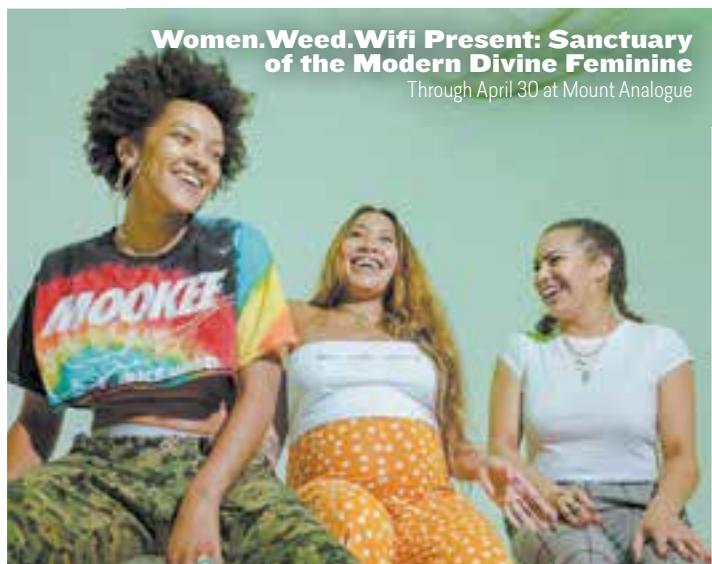
John Mayer catalyzed a folksy rebirth of American music in order to relive all of jam band extraordinaire the Grateful Dead's best moments. The whole crew will be present for two long nights in Central Washington. (*Gorge Amphitheatre, June 7-8, 7 pm, \$49-\$759.*)

★ George Clinton and Parliament Funkadelic, Dumpstaphunk, Fishbone, Miss Velvet & the Blue Wolf

Since the 1970s, funk fanatics have gotten their ass-clapping kicks through the George Clinton groovy incarnations Parliament, Funkadelic, and P-Funk All Stars. All of us licentious listeners have been wandering in the desert for almost 40 years waiting for the promised land that is *Medicaid Fraud Dogg*, Parliament's

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first record since 1980, which showcases a millennial-savvy Clinton. With the help of a stage full of seductive dancers (previously seen doing handstand backbends on monitors) and crooners with honey-throated pipes, being in a room with the King of Funk and his glamorous entourage is a humidifying shower of sultriness. **ZACH FRIMMEL** (*Showbox Soda, Thurs Aug 8, 8 pm, \$50/\$55*)

The Gladiators with Droop Lion, I Roots
Reggae-soul artist Droop Lion will join seasoned roots-reggae band the Gladiators, who have been on the scene since the 1970s. Get there early for an opening set from another reggae band, I Roots. (*El Corazón, Wed June 26, 9 pm, \$15/\$20*)

Iration, Pepper, Fortunate Youth, Katastro
Alt-reggae enthusiasts Iration rise out of the college town muck of Isla Vista to share their low-key sunny day grooves with the rest of the West Coast on their tour with support from Pepper, Fortunate Youth, and Katastro. (*Marymoor Park, Wed Aug 21, 5:30 pm, \$35/\$40*)

★ Joe Russo's Almost Dead
My friends can't stop talking about Joe Russo's Almost Dead, aka JRAD, which was supposed to be a one-off show featuring interpretations of Grateful Dead songs but turned into a full-time touring powerhouse selling out shows nationwide. Joe Russo was originally the drums-and-percussion half of Benevento Russo Duo with Marco Benevento—also a member of JRAD—and his post-Duo efforts include work with Gene Ween, Cass McCombs, and Furthur, a Dead spin-off featuring Bob Weir and Phil Lesh. JRAD was conceived in 2013 after Russo's stint with Furthur ended, and in addition to Benevento on keys, its current incarnation features Ween bassist Dave Dreiwitz, and Scott Metzger and Tom Hamilton on vocals and guitars. By all accounts, they put on an epic, must-see show—recognizable as Grateful Dead music, but with its own heavier bend and heady persuasions. **LEILANI POLK** (*Marymoor Park, Sat June 1, 6 pm, \$43/\$45*)

Rebelution, Collie Buddz, Durand Jones & the Indications
Old-school Californian reggae boys Rebelution will bring their dawn patrol vibes to the only sometimes sunny Redmond area on their Good Vibes Summer Tour with additional special guests Collie Buddz and Durand Jones & the Indications. (*Marymoor Park, Sat June 29, 6 pm, \$22-\$40*)

Santana, the Doobie Brothers
Guitarist Carlos Santana—who's featured in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame—will come to Seattle with his band on his Supernatural Now Tour. They'll be joined by classic rock band the Doobie Brothers. (*White River Amphitheatre, Sat June 29, 7 pm, \$47-\$606*)

Slightly Stoopid, Matisyahu, Tribal Seeds, HIRIE
The seven-piece Ocean Beach group Slightly Stoopid, plus Matisyahu, Tribal Seeds, and HIRIE, will generate their big-rock, reggae-inspired, canna-happy vibes. (*Marymoor Park, Sun July 14, 5:30 pm, \$22-\$45*)

Sublime with Rome, SOJA, Common Kings
Put on your baja and longboard down to Redmond for a Sublime reunion show (R.I.P. Bradley), with Rome, SOJA, and Common Kings. (*Marymoor Park, Sun June 23, 6 pm, \$40/\$45*)

★ Wu-Tang Clan

Don't miss your chance to see Ghostface Killah, Method Man, RZA, and other original members of Staten Island legends Wu-Tang Clan as they come through Seattle on their 36 Chambers 25th Anniversary Celebration Tour. (*WaMu Theater, Fri June 21, 8 pm, \$47*)

★ Ziggy Marley, Michael Franti & Spearhead

The honest, upbeat rhythms and lyrics of Ziggy Marley are more on-point than ever with his last album, *Rebellion Rises*. With a list of tracks dedicated to the struggle, strife, and salvation of social justice (and the world at large), such as "See Dem Fake Leaders" and "I Am a Human," Marley's harmonic voice carries through with powerful vulnerability. However, these songs are not all about what Marley thinks—he wants you to be a part of this too, offering songs that invite the listener to push back against the status quo. With a menagerie of musical textures supporting each message of resistance, you'll sway and dance along to a shared truth with Ziggy. **SOPHIA STEPHENS** (*Chateau Ste. Michelle, June 21-22, 6:30 pm, \$55-\$80*)

OTHER STONER EVENTS

Cannabis Trivia Night

Test your knowledge of cannabis science, history, law, terpenes, pop culture, and more at this weed-centric trivia night. (*Via Tribunali, second Mondays, 5:30-8 pm, \$5*)

★ The Gateway Show

It's an experiment in stand-up: Four comics do their sets. Then these four comics get super, duper stoned. Then they perform again while occupying this much hazier headspace. Or attempt to perform again. Will the bake bring out another dimension of their comedy, or will they bomb, one by one, in forgetful spells of heaping laughter (or awkward pauses)? This sounds like an entertaining experiment, and they do it once a month. **LEILANI POLK** (*Club Comedy Seattle, Thurs May 9 & Thurs June 6, 8 pm, \$15/\$20*)

Reefer Madness

Inspired by the strange and often-referenced film of the same title, this musical comedy explores the dangers of the "devil's weed." (*Second Story Repertory, June 7-30, Fri-Sun, \$29/\$30*)

★ Seattle Hempfest 2019

The "premier flagship event of the global cannabis culture," Seattle's massive Hempfest will return once again for three days of music, talks, pot-loving celebrity guests and congresspeople, and hundreds of vendors. (*Myrtle Edwards Park, Aug 16-18, \$10 suggested donation*)

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GREEN GUIDE ACTIVITIES

WORD SEARCH

- | | |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. THC | 16. joint |
| 2. marijuana | 17. shwag |
| 3. haze | 18. indica |
| 4. weed | 19. dank |
| 5. extract | 20. pot |
| 6. stoner | 21. kush |
| 7. preroll | 22. sativa |
| 8. CBD | 23. reefer |
| 9. bong | 24. vaping |
| 10. munchies | 25. toke |
| 11. spliff | 26. sticky |
| 12. bowl | 27. blunt |
| 13. hybrid | 28. herb |
| 14. baked | 29. roach |
| 15. flower | 30. bud |

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WHO SAID THAT?

Match the quote to the celebrity stoner!

- “From a natural stiffness, I melted into a grinning tolerance. Walking on the streets became a high adventure, eating my mother’s huge dinners, an opulent entertainment, and playing with my son was side-cracking hilarity. For the first time, life amused me.”
- “When I was a kid, I inhaled frequently. That was the point.”
- “Of course I know how to roll a joint.”
- “The illegality of cannabis is outrageous, an impediment to the full utilization of a drug which helps produce the serenity, insight, sensitivity, and fellowship so desperately needed in this increasingly mad and dangerous world.”
- “I smoke a lot of pot when I write music.”
- “That is not a drug. That’s a leaf.”



Lady Gaga



Barack Obama

Martha Stewart

Maya Angelou

Carl Sagan

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